



# News Release



Shelby County Health Department

814 Jefferson Ave., Memphis, TN 38105

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[www.shelbycountyttn.gov](http://www.shelbycountyttn.gov)

## Shelby County Health Department's Vector Control Program Celebrates National Mosquito Control Awareness Week

MEMPHIS, TN – The week of June 24-June 30, 2012 has been declared the sixteenth annual “National Mosquito Control Awareness Week” by the American Mosquito Control Association (AMCA). The AMCA, an international organization of nearly 2,000 public health professionals, has been dedicated to preserving the public's health and well-being through safe, environmentally sound mosquito control programs since 1935. During “Mosquito Week” the AMCA's goal is to educate the general public about the significance of mosquitoes in their daily lives and the important service provided by mosquito control workers throughout the United States and worldwide.

Locally, the Shelby County Health Department's Vector Control Program works year round to control the mosquito population through larviciding, adulticiding and public outreach and awareness. Larviciding is the most effective method of reducing mosquito populations. Mosquito Control workers apply larvicides to bodies of water known to produce mosquitoes to eliminate larvae before they become mosquitoes. Adulticiding (truck-mounted spraying) is the more visible method of reducing mosquitoes and is scheduled during the height of mosquito season to treat specific ZIP codes as deemed necessary.

**“Source reduction of mosquito populations is one of our primary methods in addressing and abating the mosquito populations in Shelby County. Our scientific based approach to controlling the populations is both innovative and aggressive, however, we strongly encourage education and action from our constituents to assist us in reducing the mosquito populations,”** states Dr. Tyler Zerwekh, Administrator of the Environmental Health Services Bureau at the Shelby County Health Department. The most effective ways the public can work to protect themselves and their families is do the following:

- Wear DEET-containing mosquito repellants according to label directions
- Eliminate standing water where mosquitoes can lay eggs. Check properties for objects - including old tires, flower pots and drip plates, tin cans, buckets, and children's toys - that collect rainwater and either drain or dispose of the water
- Install or repair windows and door screens
- Empty, clean and refill birdbaths and small wading pools weekly
- Empty and refill pets' water bowls every few days
- Repair failed septic systems
- Repair leaky outside faucets
- Clean rain gutters and down spouts
- Secure swimming pool covers tightly and remove any standing water after rainfall
- Store wheelbarrows, canoes and boats upside down
- Stock ornamental lawn ponds with fish (Gambusia) that eat mosquito larvae (Gambusia fish are available FREE from the Vector Control Program)

To receive more information on the efforts of Vector Control's Mosquito Control Program, please visit the following locations this week to celebrate Mosquito Control Awareness Week:

**Wednesday, June 27<sup>th</sup>**

10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Benjamin Hooks Central Library

3030 Poplar Avenue

**Thursday, June 28<sup>th</sup>**

10:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Collierville Burch Library

501 Poplar View Parkway

To speak with someone about Shelby County's Mosquito Control efforts, or to report a mosquito nuisance, please call Vector Control at **(901) 222-9715**, Monday – Friday, 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.